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William Preston Davies

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# That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

THE OTHER NIGHT I LISTENED to that ringing song, "Marching Through Georgia," as it was sung over the radio by a lusty and tuneful male chorus. A little later, in looking over a copy of Colonel Lounsberry Record I recognized the portrait of D. Carlos McAllister, a music instructor who established a studio in 1895, and who was a prominent figure in Grand Forks musical circles for several years. He came to Grand Forks from Chicago, where he had been director of one of the groups which formed part of the World's Fair chorus. He had also been prominent in Chautauqua work.

\* \* \*

I ASSOCIATE McALLISTER with "Marching Through Georgia" because it was one of his favorite songs. In those days we knew nothing about "community" singing, by that name, but we had group singing, just the same. McAllister was a good song leader, and I recall his leading in the singing of "Marching Through Georgia" at a Grand Army encampment in Grand Forks. Even that time a good many of the veterans were well along in years, and it wasn't always easy to get them to sing. Some of them had never been able to sing, some had got out of tune, and some were self-conscious. McAllister warmed them up with some of the familiar songs which reminded them of war days and camp life, and he finished up with the old song that told of Sherman's march and the gobbling turkeys and the sweet potatoes and all the rest of it. And under his leadership those old soldiers fairly raised the roof and it required little imagination to hear the tramp of the sixty thousand men swinging along on their way to the sea.

"MARCHING THROUGH Georgia" is not a popular song in the south. I don't know what would happen to anyone who dared to sing it in Georgia itself. I once attended a large convention in an eastern city where hundreds of delegates were assembled in an immense auditorium. An excellent song leader was conducting a general sing fest. The company was in the best of humor and the best of feeling prevailed. Everyone joined heartily in the singing. The song leader started "Marching Through Georgia," and everybody was ready to join when a delegate from the state of Georgia rose in his place, and, his face white with anger and his voice trembling with passion, denounced the singing of that song as an insult to his state. Nobody had thought of anything of the sort, of course. If there had been any thinking done it would have been with a sort of vague notion that the singing of the song was a compliment to the state, like "Swanee River," or "My Old Kentucky Home." Not so with the Georgian. To him the song meant exultation over homes ransacked, cattle driven off, food carried away, and a fertile and productive territory left desolate. He, a small boy during the war, had heard his parents and their neighbors tell of the privation which they had suffered as a result of that famous march, and the singing of the song, militant and triumphant, was too much for him. His protest was not a tactful thing, but I wonder how many of us, under like circumstances, would have been capable of tact.

\* \* \*

MRS. FRANCES M. HEATH, whose home near Grand Forks is known for its wonderful collection of native wild flowers, writes:

"I saw your request for more of the song Mr. Durand used to sing. I cannot remember all of it but am sending what I can recall as it may help someone else to supply the missing sentences.

"Oh I have a wife and a nice little baby

Away up north in lower Canadaa;  
And won't they shout when they see Old Shady

Acoming, acoming: Hail that mighty day.

"Then goodbye Mars Jeff, Gooby Mars Stevens,  
And cuse this niggah for taking his lebens,

But I specks by and by to see  
Uncle Abraham  
Acoming, acoming: Hail the mighty day.

"Old Mars got scared, and so did his lady,  
And dis chille breaks away for Old Uncle Aby,  
And won't they shout when they see Old Shady  
Acoming, acoming: Hail that mighty day.

"Chorus: Then away, away, I can't stay here no longer,  
Then away, away, for I'se a gwine home.

"I enjoy your writings very much and would enjoy them still more if I had more time to read them and comment on them and supply some occasional missing links."

\* \* \*

MRS. HEATH'S CONTRIB-  
ution is appreciated, and any  
sup-

Thursday Oct 2

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

MY MAIL HAS JUST BROUGHT me a letter bearing a British stamp and the imprint of the Berkeley, which I know by reputation as a pretty good London hotel. The letter began "Dear W. P.," and as I couldn't think of anyone in London who would be likely to address me in just that way, I looked at the signature before reading the letter. My letter proved to be from an old friend, J. F. T. O'Connor. In addition to some personal matter the letter contains interesting comment on a number of things across the water. It reads in part:

\* \* \*

"BUSINESS CONDITIONS ARE not good anywhere in Europe. Unemployment is increasing. Here in England 2,139,571 persons are officially reported to be unemployed. While I have not the figures, a similar condition exists in Italy, Germany and France. The business leaders are more concerned over the German elections than the press is willing to admit. It would have seemed unlikely to most of us a few years ago that a radical party would ever demand a dictatorship, yet that is what has happened in Germany. They seem to lack confidence in the ability of the people to rule. As you know, the per capita \* \* \* here is twice that in Germany and three times that in the United States. Russia last week flooded the market here with wheat and the price dropped to the lowest point in twenty years. We seem to be in a panic of plenty—too much foodstuffs, too much production in every line. Rather a strange kind of panic.

\* \* \*

"I NEVER PASS WASHINGTON's statue here but I think of the courage of the people of Virginia in presenting it and the tolerance

of the people here in accepting it. I visited the crypt in St. Paul's yesterday and noted the beauty of the Florence Nightingale memorial tablet placed on the wall between the tombs of Lord Nelson and the Duke of Wellington—like an angel of peace between the demons of war."

Frank O'Connor is one of a large group of young men whom Grand Forks has sent out into the world who have reflected credit on their home town and home state. Born on a farm in Grand Forks county and educated in the public schools and state university he added to a broadening legal practice a lively interest in public affairs. In two bitterly fought campaigns he rendered good service to his state as one of the leaders in the movement to uphold the credit and integrity of the state against the onslaughts made upon it. Later he became a member of the great Los Angeles law firm of which Hon. W. G. McAdoo is the head. Some weeks ago he visited Grand Forks on his way East, and he is now in London on legal business for his firm.

\* \* \*

DISCUSSION OF THE WATER problem has reminded me of an incident of my farming days and of a popular belief which I suppose may be called a superstition. This belief, which I have often heard expressed, is that a gopher "always goes down to water," and that if one will follow a gopher hole straight down he will find plenty of water.

\* \* \*

NEEDING A WELL NEAR THE barn, the hired man and I selected what seemed to be a good place for it and were about to dig. Noticing a gopher hole a few feet away I said: "A few feet one way or the other will make no difference, so let's see what there is in that idea of gophers always going down to water." We moved over and followed the gopher hole until it ran out at one side. I never knew where it went. But we kept on digging until at twelve feet we struck a vein of gravel that carried an inexhaustible quantity of excellent water. It was the best well in that part of the country, and water was hauled from it for many miles for threshing rigs and for live stock in seasons of drouth. Another well, without

any gopher hole, 300 feet away and of the same depth, did not reach gravel and yielded rather inferior water and little of it in a dry time. I am not trying to prove anything, but am merely telling about that well. One gopher doesn't prove much, anyway.

—W. P. DAVIES.



Friday Oct 3

## That Reminds Me—W.P.L.

ONE NIGHT THE RADIO brought the sound of a cuckoo clock. Perhaps some of you heard it. One comedian was trying to explain daylight saving to another. He said:

"I'll just show you. What time is it now by your watch?"

"Ain't got a watch," said the other. "I hocked it."

"Well, you must have some way of telling time. What does your clock say?"

"What does my clock say?"

"Yes, what does it say?"

"Cuckoo, cuckoo."

That reminded me of one of the meanest nights I ever put in, and after I had told my friend about it the friend asked:

"Why don't you write that yarn for your column."

I said I would, and I am doing it.

\* \* \*

I TOOK THE TRAIN ONE summer evening many years ago for a small town in Pembina county to attend the wedding next day of the daughter of a friend. It had been uncertain whether I would go by that train that night or by another next morning, so I did not expect anyone to meet me. I had never visited the place before, but I knew that my friend lived one and one-half miles northeast of the village. There would be no difficulty about finding the place.

\* \* \*

THE TRAIN LEFT GRAND Forks about 8 P. M. and was due about 11. Everything went well until we had got about half way when we stopped suddenly. A horse, wandering along the track, had undertaken to walk across a trestle. In some way the beast had got about half way across and had then slipped, with all four legs down among the ties. That was the first and only horse that I ever helped to get out of such a predicament. There were only three or four pas-

sengers, and we and the train crew tugged and lifted and rolled until we finally got the animal upon solid ground and we were two hours late.

\* \* \*

I GAVE UP THE IDEA OF GOING to the farm that night, especially as I didn't know exactly where it was. I inquired if there was a hotel in the place, and the station agent pointed to a ramshackle building which he said answered that purpose. Everything was dark but I made a racket at the door and was admitted. By the light of an oil lamp dimly burning I was shown to a room and I turned in. I was very tired, for lifting that horse had been hard work, and I was sound asleep almost instantly. Sometime later I became conscious of a feeling of great discomfort. I aroused and lit the lamp to investigate. One glance was sufficient. The room was alive with bugs. They were everywhere, in the bed, on the walls and on the ceiling. There being more of them than of me I yielded my place. Shaking my clothes carefully I dressed, then descended the stairs as quietly as possible and stole out into the silent night.

\* \* \*

I STRUCK OUT FOR THE country, hoping to find my friend's house. At the edge of the village I saw a light burning and I thought it would be a good idea to drop in and inquire the way. I approached the house quietly and when I reached the door I saw that the light came from a lamp which was turned very low. Evidently no one was up, so I started back for the front gate. As I did so I heard an ominous sound "G-r-r-r." Something like that. There was a dog in the offing, with a deep bass voice. I stopped, wishing to ascertain the dog's intentions. He said nothing. Neither did I. Presently I moved one foot cautiously. "G-r-r-r!" observed the dog from the darkness. I stopped. We kept that up, it seemed to me, for an hour or more, the dog commenting on every step I took. At length I was clear of the premises and I started.

\* \* \*

NATURALLY I CHOSE THE wrong direction and went nearly three miles before I found a house. It proved to be my friend's. As the house was full of people he was sleeping on a shakedown on the floor and I turned in with him after telling of my adventures. I

was just dropping into a blissful sleep when something went off right over my head, "Whir-r-r, Cuckoo! Cuckoo!" It was a cuckoo clock which someone had brought the young lady for a wedding present. It cuckooed every fifteen minutes. After each spasm I would be a nervous wreck for several minutes. Then I would settle down and try to sleep. Presently I would begin to wonder if it wasn't about time for the infernal thing to go off again. So it went until exhausted, I could endure no more and I passed into unconsciousness. I have never had any use for a cuckoo clock since.

W. P. DAVIES.



Sat Oct 4

## That Reminds Me—W.P.L.

LOOKING OVER AN OLD book in the files of City Auditor Evanson I have come across many names once familiar, but many of them now almost forgotten. The book is the register of cases of illness which developed during the typhoid fever epidemic of 1893-94. It is apparent from the form in which the entries appear that the cases were not recorded as they occurred, but that the physicians kept track of the cases during the scourge and turned in the names en bloc at some later date. This is not strange when one considers the number of cases and the small number of physicians in the city at that time.

\* \* \*

There are recorded in all 1,467 cases, of which approximately 1,200 were typhoid fever, the remainder representing diseases of many kinds. Grand Forks was hard hit by disease that winter, for after the typhoid was over there were enough cases of measles, diphtheria and scarlet fever to constitute a fair-sized epidemic of each of these diseases. The number of cases of typhoid was so great that it overshadowed all the others, so that mention is seldom made of the occurrence of the other diseases at that time.

\* \* \*

TYPHOID APPEARS TO HAVE made its appearance in the city early in December, 1893. A few cases are reported to have started near the first of the month, and the number was increased gradually until about Christmas. A number of cases started on Christmas day, and many in the days just before and after, and by the end of the month the disease was in full swing. New cases were reported by the score during the next two months, then the pestilence subsided gradually until the disease seems to have spent its force by early March.

\* \* \*

DURING THOSE THREE OR four months the few physicians here were run off their feet. The physicians reporting during the typhoid period were Drs. Cora Smith Eaton, Harriman, Rutledge, Logan, Crane, Fawcett, Wheeler, Duggan, Taylor, Irwin, Eggers Engstad, Westeen and Montgomery. Of those fourteen only Drs. Eggers and Engstad are now living. The number of cases divided by the number of physicians gives a quotient of close to 100 each, and when it is remembered that most of those cases occurred during two months and that typhoid is a disease which runs ordinarily for several weeks, it is apparent that during that time the doctors had no idle time on their hands. There were only a few trained nurses in the city. Some others were brought in from other cities, but most of the nursing was done by local people, very often in their own families, for there were few families that escaped. Almost the only families that escaped were those living in the outskirts of the city and whose drinking water was obtained from wells. Even these did not escape entirely, for some members of such families worked down town and there drank tap water.

\* \* \*

ONE NAME ATTRACTED MY attention because it appeared so many times on the same page. The family was that of Rev. E. M. Atwood, an evangelist and supply preacher who made his headquarters in Grand Forks. The cases in the Atwood family occurred as follows: Grace May, aged 13, Jan. 9; Mrs. Hattie, 36, Jan. 9; Omar, 15, Jan. 18; Willie, 12, Jan. 26; E. M., 45, Jan. 31; Ward, 17, Jan. 16. Mrs. Atwood died Jan. 30. Among the scores of familiar names in the list are Mrs. Jas Twamley, Mrs. A. L. Hunter, Jno. M. Cochrane, Mattie Caswell, four members of the Hunt family, five members of the Bushes family, Judge C. F. Templeton, Jerry Dow, Carrie Clemmer, presumably daughter of School Superintendent Clemmer, Frank DeCamp, O. A. Webster, Alvin Clifford, Mrs. Robert Bergh, W. A. Gordon, Mrs. W. H. Brown, A. J. Tagley, Walter Ruggles, W. S. Lyeon, J. W. Scott, W. R. Lasham, W. Hamilton Spence, Presbyterian pastor, Mrs. L. Brown, wife of Congregational pastor, Mrs. Frank Ephraim, Geo. F. Shutt, Percy Wilder, John Selby, Ansel Wineman, Mrs. D. P. McLaurin, four in Judge P. McLoughlin's family, F. W. Schlager.

THESE NAMES WILL SUFFICE. These names are merely those of a few well-known people taken at random, and a list many times as long, of persons as well known, could be compiled.

W. P. DAVIES.

Mon Oct 6

## That Reminds Me—W.P.L.

MRS. JOHN S. WATSON OF Fargo has given the Presbyterian college at Jamestown \$50,000 for the erection of a new building. It has not been my privilege to know Mrs. Watson, but I think that if those who have passed from this life are still able to observe and understand what is being done here, her generous act will have the hearty approval of her husband, who passed on some years ago. I met John S. Watson in Jamestown in 1882. He was then a young lawyer just starting out, occupying an unpretentious little office and having a small practice. The town was small and young, and in it were represented most of the elements that go to make up a frontier community. There was a good deal of speculative fever in the air, and there were clever young fellows who seemed to be making money rapidly by brilliant strokes, and sometimes by methods which were not above criticism. Watson was of a different type. He had not then acquired the experience and the legal knowledge which later made him one of the most successful lawyers in the Northwest, but, notwithstanding his youth, he had already acquired a reputation for integrity and dependability. In a quiet, unobtrusive way he was a diligent worker for the welfare of the community. Whenever a constructive movement was under way Young Watson could be relied on to lend a hand. I never heard his name associated with a shady transaction. He left Jamestown for a larger field, and prospered abundantly. Knowing him as a young man, and having watched his later career with interest, it seems to me that if he could be conscious of his wife's act he would derive great happiness from the knowledge that a part of his

life work is to be reflected in a fine contribution to the educational facilities of the city in which his first professional work was done, and which must have had many pleasant associations for him.

\* \* \*

A NOTE FROM BUDD REEVE of Buxton reminds me that September 16 was the anniversary of the raising of his "Flag of the Earth, the First and Only Flag Common to all Nations." The flag, designed by Mr. Reeve himself, was of many and brilliant colors, and in order to buy it and a great American flag its author had sold a team of horses. The flag was raised with appropriate ceremonies on Third street, and was suspended by lines running from the Security building to the Hotel Dacotah.

\* \* \*

AN ARTICLE IN THE HERALD of the day following the flag raising gives a list of the persons present at the ceremony. Among them were Judge Morgan of the supreme court, the attorney general of the state, Judge C. J. Fisk of the district court, Mayor Duis and a number of other prominent citizens, several of whom have departed from this life.

The ceremony did not attract very much attention, but it gave expression to one man's dream of a universal brotherhood toward which, in a groping way, many millions are striving. It was the hope of Mr. Reeve that the movement of which his flag was the emblem would speedily gain momentum, and that the flag which he had raised would be raised year after year in commemoration of the birth of a new spirit in the affairs of men. That hope has not quite been realized, but the fire that animated the spirit of that little old man twenty-three years ago has never ceased to burn, and Budd Reeve, crippled for years, now hopes to have the coming Armistice day celebrated by having his flag again flung to the breeze as a token of unquenchable faith in the cause to which it was dedicated.

MRS. WILLIAM LIVINGOOD of Lidgerwood sends in a version of one stanza of "Old Shady" which is quite similar to several that have already been published. Responses for requests for the song have come from so many directions that the piece must at one time have been quite well known.

Mrs. Livingood also requests the words of the song "The Widow

Dunn." That brings up old times. That song was familiar in the days when members of the melodrama company would set before the curtain and sing "specialty" songs between acts. I can remember just a little bit of the chorus:

"She warbles aisy;  
She's sure to plaize ye;  
Such a voice has the little Widow  
Dunn."

That may help to bring the rest of the sing back to someone who knows it better than I do.

W. P. DAVIES.



Sun Oct 7

## That Reminds Me—W.P.L.

IF YOU WANT TO SEE NATURE clothed in her most gorgeous garments, just drive out some day very soon in any direction and take a look. As a preference I would suggest Minnesota Point, between the Red and Red Lake rivers, for in that direction there is more natural timber than can be found elsewhere nearby, but any direction will do, especially in the Red river valley, for there is timber in every direction, either the natural growth along the streams or the groves planted by man, in which there are some splendid trees. Perhaps one gets the best effect in the late afternoon on a clear day, for the effect of the slanting rays of the sun on the masses of foliage brings out tints which are indescribably beautiful. However, if the day is cloudy, go anyway, for then the coloring will be different, and there will be sombre shadows which have a beauty of their own.

\* \* \*

IN THIS SECTION WE MISS some of the brilliant masses of scarlet that are to be found in some other localities, for there are no hard maples here. We miss the glistening white of the birch trunks and the wonderful greens that one finds on the pine-clad hills of northern Minnesota. But these are not needed to make a beautiful picture. In the cities we look askance at the cottonwood, and with some reason, but just now, when the foliage has ripened and the frost has touched it, what could be more pleasing than the shimmering yellows of masses of cottonwoods touched by the rays of the setting sun?

WE HAVE A GREATER abundance of cottonwoods than of any other tree. Every stream is bordered with them, and the settlers who experimented in the early years with tree planting found that the cottonwoods have the best assurance of results. Hence the cottonwood predominates in most of the artificial groves, and there are some noble trees to be found in those plantings. Because of the abundance of cottonwoods and the coloring of the elm, which is our next most numerous tree, yellow is the prevailing hue in the color scheme, and there are as many tints of it as could be mixed on the palette of a Turner.

\* \* \*

BUT OUR FALL LANDSCAPE is not all of one color. Here and there are masses of red oak, whose foliage, ranging all the way from deep crimson to brilliant scarlet, is as brilliant as anything that grows. There are poplars whose trunks, at a little distance, are difficult to distinguish from the gleaming white of the birch. Then there is the smaller growth which lends its touch of color. An occasional patch of sumach shows its variegated foliage and its deep crimson bloom. The Virginia creeper is at its finest, and it will match anything to be found anywhere. There is an abundance of smaller growth, numerous trees and shrubs whose names I do not know, but which match the rainbow in variety and exceed it in deepness of coloring. There are the thornapples, with their clusters of red berries, and the masses of haws, which are indistinguishable from a distance, but which bring themselves into the picture on closer inspection.

I know of nothing in nature finer than a fine October day. It is not easy to determine which is to be preferred, the clear fall day when the air fairly sparkles and there seems to be no limit to the vision, or the day which is shrouded in the faint haze of Indian summer. They are all glorious.

QUITE NATURALLY SUCH days here recall other days and other scenes, where the fall coloring was different, but no more beautiful, days among the Eastern hills, where maples furnished the warmer tints and the yellows were those of beech and white oak. There were nut-bearing trees which are not native here, walnut, and butternut, beechnut and chestnut and hickory, and what adventure there was in the gathering of those nuts for winter use. I have in mind a little grove of chestnuts where, on a warm, quiet afternoon following a frost, one could lie at ease on a soft bed of fallen leaves and listen to the gentle "chuck" of chestnuts as they dropped from their opened burrs and of the chatter of the squirrels as they scampered back and forth gathering their harvest and storing it in secret hiding places. Walnut gathering was real work. If one waited long enough the nuts would fall of their own accord, but the squirrels would carry them off, or some youth might collect them for himself. Hence our usual custom was to hasten the harvest by throwing clubs into the trees and shaking the nuts off. As the trees were usually tall, one felt that he had done a day's work when he had collected a few bushels of walnuts.

—W. P. DAVIES.

Wed Oct 8

## That Reminds Me—W.P.L.

A HEADLINE IN THE CHICAGO Journal of Commerce reads:

"Alleged Chicago Bankers Rob Coast Bank."

The story comes from Los Angeles, and the natural inference was that business practices which have been prevalent in certain circles are being extended into other lines and given nation-wide application. The paragraph itself which describes the robbery says that the two robbers described themselves as gangsters, not bankers. Great opportunity there for the funny man to get in his work.

\* \* \*

GILBERT K. CHESTERTON thinks that George Bernard Shaw's new play, "The Apple Cart," is the best that Shaw ever wrote, and for once Shaw agrees with Chesterton. For the sake of the audiences I hope it is better than "Saint Joan." That play, as a play, was awful. It wasn't—or perhaps I should say isn't—a play at all. It is a satirical essay twisted into the physical form of a play in which the author puts Twentieth century thoughts and conclusions into the minds and mouths of medieval characters and has his people deliver interminable harangues on church and state in the guise of dramatic entertainment. I sat through four hours of it—or was it five?—and was thoroughly bored. The fact that I was bored does not mean much, but everybody else was bored. That fact was very evident from the restlessness, inattention and general air of weariness throughout the house. The impression left on me was that Mr. Shaw had been talking at me all night through the mouths of a lot of stage puppets. That is not my idea of a good play.

\* \* \*

THE PICTURE OF SKEEZIX and Spud hoisting their unsuspecting victim out of his tracks by means of a swinging sack, heavily loaded, recalls a game of my boyhood in which a boy instead of a sack was used to deliver the blow. We called it "beetle and wedge." For the benefit of the younger generation I may explain that a beetle is a heavy wooden maul, or mallet, used for driving metal or wooden wedges into logs in splitting them for rails or cordwood. When a new boy showed up at school he would be invited to join in a game of beetle and wedge. If he consented he would be blindfolded and placed in a proper crouching position. He represented the wedge. For the beetle another boy, as heavy as could conveniently be handled, would be chosen. Two lusty youths would lift him, each holding an arm and a leg on the same side. Then they would swing, one, two, three bang! and the luckless initiate would be propelled into space. As ours was a fairly democratic group the consent of the governed was usually sought, but if it were not given the novitiate was apt to be held in position by main force until given the necessary impetus. And an impressive blow can be struck by the use of a 100-pound boy as a weapon.

\* \* \*

E. M. WALSH OF CROOKSTON dropped in the other day. He and the late Geo. H. Walsh of Grand Forks were brothers, and both, of course, were sons of Uncle Tom, whom everyone in Grand Forks knew years ago. Mr. Walsh has been engaged in the real estate business in Crookston for many years, but he first settled at Grand Forks with the rest of the family. Like many of the other early residents of the city he engaged in steamboating under the direction of Captain Alex Griggs. A little yarn in this column reminded him of old days in the river.

\* \* \*

"CAPTAIN GRIGGS," HE SAID, "was a man of enormous energy. He could get an immense amount of work out of a crew, and one reason was that he never shirked work himself. He would tackle anything, and when he spoke everybody jumped. While I was a mere youngster I was a sort of second cook and dishwasher on one of the Griggs boats. On one

trip we got hung up on a sandbar, and while I was at my kitchen work the rest of the crew were trying to get us afloat. When I got through I sat for a moment with my feet over the side, watching the others at work. They were all waist-deep in the water, pushing and prying, with the captain shouting orders and lifting more than anyone else. Looking up he spied me and shouted 'What the devil do you mean, sitting there? Get to work and let's get this boat off.' I was so startled that I gave one leap into the water and landed right up to my neck. The captain had a hearty laugh. His bark was worse than his bite, but he made us work."

W. P. DAVIES.



Thurs Oct 9

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

I LISTENED OVER THE RADIO to President Hoover's King's Mountain speech. It was a good speech, full of thought, well prepared and well delivered. The radio gives one many interesting experiences, and it was very interesting to sit here in Grand Forks and listen to the actual sounds of a great meeting away down in South Carolina. The president's voice naturally dominated the situation because he had the microphone directly in front of him. But in the background there were other sounds that conveyed the impression of a vast audience. There was no disorder. The attention was perfect, and the applause was liberal and enthusiastic. But there was an occasional sound as of persons shifting their positions, and an indefinable impression as if one could feel the great assemblage breathing. There was almost the feeling that one could see the vast crowd massed on the hillside.

\* \* \*  
THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS was followed by the singing of "America the Beautiful," in which the selected voices on the stage were heard clearly, but the voice of the crowd scarcely registered. Then came the reading of a rather long original poem. It was then that the evidence of the crowd's presence took on a different form. The reader could be heard quite distinctly at this distance, for he had the microphone. But I do not believe that people ten feet away could have heard him. The whole crowd was on the move, evidently intent on getting away from there. Boys whistled in the distance. There were catcalls and groans. To one on the spot the confusion

must have been awful, and I pitied the poor reader, doing his stuff with not a soul listening. I determined then and there that no program committee could ever induce me to read a poem, original or otherwise, following an address by the president of the United States. If they want to put me on first, I'll think it over.

\* \* \*  
THE EPISODE SUGGESTS TO me a bit of what I believe to be sound advice to program committees: Don't put on extra features after your main speaker. The principal speaker at a meeting is supposed to leave an impression that is of some consequence. That impression should not be erased or obscured by inconsequential remarks by Tom, Dick and Harry. If there are to be other short talks and minor features, let them come first, and let the people leave with the words and the thought of the real speaker fresh in their minds.

\* \* \*  
I WASN'T SURE THAT ANYONE would remember "Little Widow Dunn," but I find that there are still those who recall parts of it. Joe Griffiths, of the local court house force, remembers parts of it, and came through with several lines, and an unknown friend at Drayton supplies what appears to be a fairly complete version as follows:

"I enjoy very much reading 'That Reminds Me' in the Grand Forks Herald. I read in last evening's Herald a part of the old song 'The Widow Dunn,' and a request that some one furnish the words of this old song. It must be at least 50 years ago that I heard this song sung, and I committed it to memory at that time. I can remember some of it yet, with probably some misplaced words.

"She's a charming little widow and she keeps a candy store  
Where the boys they go to buy their chewing gum.  
She sells taffy for a penny and her name is on the door,  
And every body loves the Widow Dunn.

### CHORUS.

"Eileen Alanna, Starry Banner's!  
Slavery days boys, every one.  
She warbles aisy; she's sure to plaize ye; such a voice has the little Widow Dunn.

"You should see her at a party singing 'brinnin' on the moor,'

Just as stately as the Duke of Wellington.

She raises up the ceiling and shakes the parlor floor;

Such a charmer is the little Widow Dunn.

"She's very fond of children and she rocks them all to sleep.  
She feeds them lollipops and sugar plum.

At every neighbor's funeral she'll dress in black and weep;

Such a tender creature is the Widow Dunn."

—  
"Probably some one can supply the missing links for the above."

\* \* \*

# *That Reminds Me—W.P.D.*

TALKING OF THIS AND THAT some of us got onto the subject of the machine age, mass production, and all that sort of thing. When a machine, tended by one man, can be made to perform the work of ten men, what becomes of the other nine men? Must we not call a halt on invention until consumption catches up with production, so that everyone may have a job?

THESE AND OTHER QUESTIONS of like character reminded me of my grandfather's spade. It was a massive implement, the only one of its kind that I ever saw. It had been brought from England in the early days with a miscellaneous collection of family possessions, and it had never been used on this side of the Atlantic except as I experimented with it.

THE SPADE HAD BEEN USED in small English fields in lieu of a plow. It had a rounded steel blade, perhaps a foot wide and eight or ten inches deep. This was mounted on a heavy wooden handle to which was attached a cross-piece at the upper end, making a T. An iron step was mounted on one side of the handle and foot-power was applied to this to force the spade into the earth. With tools like this, I was told, three men usually worked in a gang, cutting a furrow about five feet long. Each man made two cuts, and then the three would turn the cut sod over and move on for another cut. My recollection is that three men, working thus, would turn over from one acre to two acres a day.

THE TOOL WAS CLUMSY AND awkward, much too heavy for any but a strong man to use. Compar-

ed with the modern plow, with its curved and polished mouldboard, it was absurdly inefficient. Yet to the people who first used it on their little fields it was the very latest thing in mechanization, for, crude as it was, it enabled a few men to do more work in a day than a greater number had been able to do working singly with ordinary spades. Its adoption on any considerable scale must have resulted in throwing a good many men out of employment, at least for the time being.

THAT IMPLEMENT WAS SUPPLANTED by the walking plow, and we have now the gang plow drawn by a tractor. And before the era of that particular spade there were the ordinary spade, the hoe and the pointed stick, and the latter is still in use in some parts of the world. In each case a mechanical invention has been used as a substitute for manual labor. At what point in the line should invention have been checked? Should we now return to the sharpened stick, or should we compromise on Grandfather's spade? Those who have retained the stick do not appear to be especially prosperous, nor do they give evidence of great social or intellectual advancement. And those who plowed with the spade knew the pinch of hard times.

JUST NOW SOME OF THE factory employes in the cotton mills of Lancashire and Yorkshire are protesting against the introduction of improved machinery which will increase the output of a given quantity of labor. It is feared that this will result in more unemployment. Again I draw on my grandfather's recollections of that same district, and of his father's stories of a still earlier day. Many minor events there were dated from "the year when the steam looms were smashed." Weaving had been done on hand looms set up in the homes of the weavers. Power looms had been invented and a number of them were to be installed in the textile district. There were riots all over the place, and many of those new-fangled devices were seized and wrecked before troops could be brought to the scene to restore order.

THE STEAM LOOM HAS GIVEN employment to many times the number of persons formerly working by hand. Factory conditions have been far from ideal, but the factory employes have worked fewer hours per day, and have been better housed, better fed and better clothed than their grandparents, and have enjoyed more of the advantages of wholesome life. There are still hand weavers in the world, but what factory worker would exchange his lot for theirs?

THEORETICALLY THE SEWING machine ought to have thrown millions of seamstresses out of employment and its invention must have been a world-wide calamity. But Hood's "Song of a Shirt" was written long before the sewing machine came into being.

With fingers weary and worn, with eyelids heavy and red,  
A woman sat, in unwomanly rags,  
plying her needle and thread.  
Stitch! Stitch! Stitch! in poverty,  
hunger and dirt;  
And still, with a voice of dolorous pitch,  
she sang the "Song of the Shirt."

That terrible poem, which shocked England into some appreciation of what human misery meant, was written of the hand worker, before the age of machines and mass production.

—W. P. DAVIES.



Sat Oct 11

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

L. J. W. ASKS: IS IT TRUE that the use of aluminum utensils makes food poisonous or causes it to produce cancer?

No, it isn't true.

How do I know, being neither chemist nor bacteriologist?

Well, for the past quarter of a century I have been eating food cooked in aluminum, and I am not poisoned, so far as anybody knows, nor have I developed symptoms of cancer. Perhaps that is not conclusive. One person's experience doesn't count for much. Well, then, there are millions and millions of other people who have also been eating food cooked in aluminum, doing it year after year, and I have never heard of a case of aluminum poisoning in all these years, and cancer is no more prevalent among them than among those who cook in other material.

\* \* \*

A FEW YEARS AGO THERE was conducted by a research body under the auspices of an institution of national standing—I have forgotten which—an investigation of the effect of cooking utensils on food. Tests which were published, were that the kind of material used in utensils has no appreciable effect on food, and no effect at all from the standpoint of health. Any kind of utensil, it was found, is safe provided it is clean. The authorities are agreed, of course, that cancer is not caused by foods or poisons in food, but is developed from causes of an entirely different character.

\* \* \*

MANY OF US REMEMBER the copper kettle of our youth. Copper is a very soft metal, easily corroded by exposure to air or acids. A piece of copper, exposed

and neglected, will soon be covered with a green film of verdigris, which is understood to be quite poisonous. Yet there was a time when the copper kettle was the main stay of almost every kitchen. Into it went fruits and vegetables, acid or otherwise, and even with a metal as sensitive as copper there appeared to be no poisoning. The vessels were scoured until they shone, and that seemed to be all that was necessary.

\* \* \*

TO THE PUBLIC CANCER HAS been a disease of mystery, and the physicians are by no means through with their investigation of it. Because no one knew its origin it has been attributed, I suppose, to everything new or unusual in the way of food. I have heard oysters blamed for it, and figs, and pineapple. In my part of the country there was a strong popular belief that tomatoes were full of cancer. Our family had brought the tomato habit with them when they moved in. I don't know where they contracted it, but they were confirmed addicts. The tomato patch was one of the principal features of our garden. We ate tomatoes raw, stewed, preserved and pickled, to the great horror of the neighbors. Presently a few of the more adventurous neighbors tempted fate by eating tomatoes, and when no cancer followed, they repeated. The tomato habit spread, and soon fears of cancer were forgotten.

When someone tries to sell you a new stewing pan, buy it, if you want it. But don't let him scare you with cock-and-bull stories about poison and cancer.

\* \* \*

I HAVE JUST RECEIVED another version of "Little Widow Dunn," identical in most parts with the one already published, and otherwise varying from it only a little. The workings of memory are interesting. I suppose none of those who have responded with parts of the song ever saw it in print. Presumably they picked it up just from hearing it sung. And they have retained it, and pretty accurately, for fifty years.

\* \* \*

I HAVE BEEN LOOKING over the verses, and my guess is that a literary critic would not

give them very high rank as poetry. The tune, as I recall it, was a simple thing that would not set the world on fire. And I have tried to compare it with some of the modern "popular" songs that one may hear by the hour over the radio if his taste lies in that direction. For instance, something like this:

My heart beats true

For you-oo-oo.

Why should I be blue,

And all in a stew.

When you are by my side?

That is a fair sample, a little better than the average, perhaps, and when I hear some fellow singing something like it through his nose, I'll vote for "Little Widow Dunn" every time. —W. P. D.

Mon Oct 13

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

SOME DAYS AGO, IN WRITING of the typhoid fever epidemic of 1903-04, I said that of the fourteen physicians whose reports of cases at that time are filed at the city hall, only two are now living. That is a mistake. Drs. Engstad and Eggers are the only two of that group now living in Grand Forks, but one other, Dr. Cora Smith Eaton, is still living, and practicing, I believe, in California.

\* \* \*  
PASSING FROM OLD SONGS, of which several have been mentioned lately, to newer ones, how do popular songs get their titles? Percy Wenrich, the composer of several hits, says that the best are frequently the result of an accident. It not often happens, he says, that a composer deliberately creates a hit title.

"The first big hit I ever wrote," Mr. Wenrich said, "was 'Rainbow.' I happened to be in a drug store and saw the name on a package of dye. 'That,' I said to myself, 'would make a great title for a song.' So I wrote 'Rainbow' and before long I had a hit on my hands.

"Put On Your Old Grey Bonnet" was originally "Put on Your Old Sun Bonnet." The publisher to whom Mr. Wrenrich submitted the number was almost famous for his inability to remember a tune or a title. He read over the number, said he thought he liked it, but wanted to reserve decision until returning from a trip to Atlantic City which he was about to take. When he returned Mr. Wenrich saw him. "Well," he asked, "what about the number? I'll bet you don't remember either

the melody or the title." "I sure do" declared the publisher, "and what's more I'll sing it. Goes like this: 'Put on Your Old Grey Bonnet.'" Then and there the name was used that became one of the biggest hits of all time.

\* \* \*  
IN A REVIEW OF A NEW Broadway play, "That's the Woman," Effie Shannon is said to have given an excellent performance in her part. Is that the Effie Shannon who played with Herbert Kelcey at the Metropolitan twenty-five or thirty years ago. I haven't been able to find the date of any appearance of these two very popular players in Grand Forks, but old theater-goers will remember well their names and perhaps some of the plays in which they appeared.

\* \* \*  
WHILE LOOKING FOR KELCEY and Shannon, just out of curiosity I ran over the plays that appeared at the Met in October, 1900, just thirty years ago. Here is the list

October 5—"A Young Wife," melodrama.

October 8—"The Fast Mail," melodrama, with elaborate mechanical scenic effects.

October 9—Grau Opera company in "El Capitan."

October 11—"Ole Olson." This was one of a number of comedies featuring the advantages of the young Swede in the lumber woods.

October 15—Grau Opera company in "The Isle of Champagne." The company spent several days in Winnipeg and played Grand Forks coming and going.

October 18—Haverly's Minstrels. This was one of the most famous of the old minstrel companies.

October 24—"A Trip to Chinatown." This was melodrama with a good deal of oriental atmosphere and plenty of thrills.

October 29—"Human Hearts." This was one of a group of "down east" plays which included "Shore Acres" and "The Old Homestead."

October 31—Walker Whiteside in "Heart and Sword."

Nine openings in one month was not bad, and the list includes pretty much everything except tragedy, and the work was generally well done. A good many people can scarcely believe it, but it's so.

—W. P. DAVIES.



Now without any apparent cause, last Monday night rain started and it continues wet, and very wet.

We have observed this several years though perhaps not to such an extreme extent as this fall.

What has happened in conditions to make such a complete change?

That is quite a large order—too large for me. People have been studying about the weather since the beginning of time, and have gained some knowledge concerning it, yet the weather continues to surprise us by its "unusualness." It has been doing that for a long time. There was excessive rain in the time of Noah, and during the reign of Ahab there was a drouth that lasted for three years.

\* \* \*

THE IMMEDIATE CAUSES OF weather changes are fairly well understood, but we have a lot to learn about the more remote causes. During the past summer there was longer and more general dry weather in this country than has been experienced for many years. One authority explained the absence of rain on the ground that there was little wind, and wind is necessary to bring moisture from distant regions. Then rainy weather began, and it was explained that this was due to the great hurricane which wrecked Santo Domingo and exhibited itself in less destructive form for many hundred miles. That sounds reasonable, but nobody has explained why there was no wind during part of the year and a tremendous quantity of it later on.

Meteorologists have pretty well established the fact that within several generations there has been no appreciable change in climate in many parts of the world. While seasons differ from each other the general average remains about the same, and no matter how extreme the conditions may be at a given time, it is generally possible to find them duplicated in the records of an earlier periods. The records indicate that the weather was as cold and as hot, as wet and as dry, a few centuries ago as it is during these present times.

W. P. DAVIES.

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

HERE IS A LITTLE ONE FOR the class in physics:

In a story published a short time ago there was described the thrilling adventure of a balloonist. The main story, I believe, is the actual record of the experience of Captain Gray in an attempt to make an altitude record in a balloon. On this occasion Captain Gray escaped with his life. In a subsequent attempt he was killed. The story, which is told as if related by the balloonist himself, tells of the effort of the aeronaut to check the speed of descent after an altitude of something over 40,000 feet had been reached. The partly deflated balloon, with Gray in the basket, was plunging earthward at terrific speed. All the ballast had been thrown out, and in order still further to lighten the load Gray threw overboard everything movable, including instruments and oxygen tank. We are told that as these small, heavy metallic objects were thrown out they seemed to shoot upward, the falling speed of the balloon being so much greater than that of the discarded objects. Did this actually happen, or didn't it? Under the conditions named, would such objects thrown overboard fall more or less rapidly than the balloon, or at the same speed?

\* \* \*

ARTHUR DIXON OF ROLLA, wants to have the weather explained. He writes:

I would appreciate an editorial in the Herald giving some comment and explanation of the extreme and complete change of weather lately experienced in North Dakota.

For some months now we have been dry, and that means dry; East winds would blow, clouds would come up, small showers would fall but it was dry.

Wed Oct 15

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

"THE SPOILERS" IS BEFORE the public again, this time as a talking picture. This story of Alaskan life and adventure has had a wonderful run, first as a book, then as a regular stage drama, next as a motion picture, and now as a talkie. Rex Beach, the author, ought to know Alaska well, for he lived there for several years during the most strenuous years of that territory's history. He knew gold miners, and freighters, and saloon keepers and gamblers. There was no phase of the life of that region which he had not an opportunity to see and study. "The Spoilers" is a story based on an actual episode in Alaskan history. It is an exceedingly readable piece of fiction, but those who accept it as history will get a greatly distorted impression of actual facts.

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN of the "looting of Alaska." Dispute arose over the ownership of valuable claims in the vicinity of Nome. The various claims were presented to the court, and Judge Noyes, a former North Dakotan, the federal judge in charge, appointed Alexander McKenzie receiver of the property pending final adjudication. McKenzie had been a conspicuous figure in North Dakota politics since early territorial days. The charge was made that the appointment of Noyes as judge and his subsequent appointment of McKenzie as receiver were parts of a carefully planned conspiracy to rob the legitimate owners of their property, and that both Noyes and McKenzie were acting in the interest of persons whose claims were without just foundation. McKenzie was tried for his share in the proceedings, was convicted, and served several months in a California jail as a penalty.

\* \* \*

BECAUSE OF THE MANNER in which these two men, especially McKenzie, figured on the Alaskan scandal, the subject was of absorbing interest in North Dakota, for McKenzie was known personally to everyone who had been at all active in the politics of the state, and known by reputation to every resident. When "The Spoilers" was published it became evident at once that the Nome episode had been used as the background for the story, and that its principal character, McNamara, was intended to suggest McKenzie. The fight over the gold claims had attracted wide attention, and because of its association with that subject it became immensely popular. The book was read eagerly all over North Dakota, and it became a sort of tradition, especially among those who had not known McKenzie, that in McNamara an accurate portrait of McKenzie was given.

\* \* \*

IT IS NOT MY PURPOSE TO criticize the book as a piece of fiction, and it is conceded that the writer of fiction is at liberty to make very free use of personalities and incidents. His purpose is to spin an interesting yarn, and not to write either history or biography. Rex Beach availed himself to the limit of this authors' privilege.

\* \* \*

MANY OF THE INCIDENTS IN "The Spoilers" correspond quite closely to incidents in the actual "looting of Alaska. They are changed, regrouped and mixed up with a love story that never happened, all to make a good story. But nothing could be more unlike Alex. McKenzie than Rex Beach's McNamara. The villain in the story is a villain all the way through, coarse, ill-mannered, almost of the typical plug-ugly. McKenzie was nothing of the sort. He was a big, good-natured Scotchman, and, while he was capable of exhibitions of passion, he was ordinarily quiet and pleasant in manner, and there was nothing about him resembling the stage villain of the Alaskan story. McKenzie's career was marked by passages which would not bear close inspection, but he was a man capable of warm friendship and who inspired warm friendship in others. There is nothing of that in the ugly character who has rather generally been accepted as his prototype.

W. P. DAVIES.



Thurs Oct 16

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

SINCE WRITING CASUALLY about Alex McKenzie and how little he resembled the character who is supposed to represent him in "The Spoilers" I have recalled a story about him which illustrates a side of his character with which the general public never came in contact. A member of his family suffered at one time from a malady which presented many perplexing features and which caused great anxiety. The best medical treatment available was procured, but McKenzie wished to understand the trouble on his own account. He began to read up on it. He bought or borrowed book after book on the subject, studied reports of cases, followed step by step experiments which had been conducted and became familiar with the conclusions of authorities. With little schooling, reared in an atmosphere which we do not associate with technical study, he accumulated a fund of information on that particular subject which was probably greater than that of the average physician who has not specialized in it. This habit was characteristic of him. When he became interested in a subject he was not content with superficial knowledge. He wanted to go to the bottom of it.

\* \* \*

IT IS A LONG JUMP FROM Alex McKenzie to Cecil B. DeMille, the famous playwright, but for certain reasons the one suggests the other. For some little time past Mr. DeMille has been a patient in a California hospital. In spite of the fact that he is able to sit up, read and do a little visiting, a report of his death got into circulation recently and found its way into some of the papers. Shortly thereafter an attendant, entering his room, found him sitting up and wearing a suit of black

pajamas. On being asked the reason for this choice of clothing he said "Haven't you read the papers? They say I am dead, and I suppose I ought to look the part."

\* \* \*

IT WAS SOMETHING ELSE OF which mention of McKenzie reminded me, however. Cecil B. DeMille is known to the public as a great playwright. He is the author of some of our modern plays, and his work has been so great in quantity and so finished in form that it might be supposed to have occupied the entire time of an industrious and rapid worker. But in some way he has found time to do an immense amount of reading. He reads history, biography and philosophy and loves to discuss those and kindred subjects with his friends. A certain amount of that sort of study might be supposed to fit in well with the work of a dramatist, for the drama deals with life in all its phases. But DeMille's study has done more than serve as a background for his plays. It has given him a fine culture of which his plays are only the partial expression.

\* \* \*

THEN, IF WE ACCEPT SUCH studies as appropriate to the dramatist, where do farming and pheasant raising come in? Mr. DeMille owns and operates several ranches of considerable size. As a part of his agricultural activity he raises pheasants commercially on a fairly large scale, and purely as a labor of love, he maintains a wonderful collection of rare varieties of pheasants, to which he is constantly making additions.

All of this goes to show that the manner in which a man makes his living is no indication of the manner in which he lives.

\* \* \*

A CORRESPONDENT HAS asked me for a list of winners in the puzzle "contests" which have appeared in this column. I am sorry that I am unable to accommodate her. In the first place, I have had no intention of instituting contests in connection with the puzzles. The various problems were presented for whatever entertainment readers could derive from them, and not with any thought of competition. Further, while I have acknowledged solutions as they have been received, no attempt has been made to group them, so that the names of those who have supplied solutions have been scattered through many issues without observance of any particular order or method.

—W. P. DAVIES.

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

B. O. PAULSNESS IS NOT sure about the first private bathtub in Grand Forks, but he thinks that the first public bath in the city was one which he installed in the early eighties in the shop of George Turpin, a colored barber, and whose son, George Jr. was well known around town for many years. Turpin's shop was where the Metropolitan theater now stands, and was not much more than a shack. A small room at the rear was fitted up as a bathroom, and there Mr. Paulsness installed a zinc tub encased in a wooden box. Water was heated by means of a coil in the heating stove in the main room and was stored in a tank overhead. From the standpoint of ventilation the place was perfect, as the wind entered freely through cracks and crevices, and in winter the room was like Greenland. One of Turpin's customers who had gone into the room for a bath called for help, and Turpin, on entering, found the man standing beside the tub, blue with cold, with teeth chattering and skin all puckered into goose-flesh. Turpin was terrified. Giving his barber a quarter he said: "Go out and get some brandy; and get back quick. We've got to do something for this man or he's going to die on us." There were saloons close by, and the barber returned quickly with a small flask. The restorative was applied and the patient was saved. Mr. Paulsness does not know whether or not Turpin thereafter served a drink with each bath, but he does know that taking a bath in Grand Forks about that time was a strenuous experience.

\* \* \*

IN THE CURRENT KIWANIS magazine is published an article on "New Roads and Old" by N. W. Dougherty, of the Tennessee state highway department. It is an excellent survey of the progress of road building from the earliest

times, and it is particularly interesting in showing how slight had been the changes in types of road construction until the advent of the automobile created a new kind of demand. Mr. Dougherty supposes the reader to be looking down on the landscape from an airplane and calls attention to the streams of vehicles speeding in all directions. Continuing, he writes:

\* \* \*

"A SINGLE MILE OF EARTH road may not be of very great importance to many people, but its kind comprises the most mileage of any known type and it has served the world longer than will any of its modern substitutes. Our picture shows the busy thoroughfares paved and smooth, reaching between the villages and the cities while the earth road leads to some obscure farmhouse or grain field where travel is a minimum and where a pavement is not economically justified.

"Now, let us look a little more closely. We see motor vehicles, a few, and some horse-drawn conveyances that seem to date back to a former period. They are not antiques. Yet they date back to a time when they and their kind held sway and no other vehicle used the road.

"As we examine the vehicle, our mind's eye travels backward to 1890, when there were no automobiles, just wagons, buggies, and other horse-drawn carriages, and one propelled by the rider himself. Later, we will note that the bicycle had its influence on highway transportation, but now we are drawn backward by the vehicle before us. We see Washington driving from his home in Virginia to the seat of government in New York or Philadelphia. His coach is pulled by six fine horses, and he has the latest development in vehicles for the road. Yes, there is a little change in vehicle from the time Caesar rode into Rome in triumph, but the motive power is the same. Caesar's car had two wheels and he stood, bowing to the multitude; Washington's car had four wheels and he was seated comfortably on cushions rising now and then as he passed to his inaugural. Nearly two thousand years had elapsed and the only change had been the addition of springs and cushions to the body of the carriage. The motive power is the same and it was the same when Pharaoh returned in triumph to Egypt, fifteen hundred

years before, and still the same when Hammurabi gave laws in Babylon another thousand years before. Horse-drawn vehicles have been supreme on the highways from the beginning of history to the present generation. A little change in the construction of the vehicle here and a modification of the appointments there, but always the same speed and the same power until the first automobile was made during the closing years of the last century. Earth roads! There are more than two million miles of them in the United States today and there will still be more than a million miles when the calendar turns to a new century."

W. P. DAVIES.



*This Oct 21*

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

"WELL, WELL! HERE WE are again!" as the circus clown used to say on entering the arena. And there we were, sure enough!

That "much-needed rest" was according to doctor's orders, and when it is suggested that I take a rest I am usually found in a reasonable frame of mind. This time it was just my luck to have no reserve supply of observations on which to fall back, so the column had to be omitted. I hope people are clamoring for it, but I haven't heard the clamor—yet.

\* \* \*  
I HAVE BEEN STUDYING colds lately. Every little while I have occasion to study one at first hand, and among other things I have been impressed by the ease with which the fellow who has no cold can account for the cold which the other fellow has. It seems that every possible kind of weather is productive of colds—dry weather, wet weather, hot weather, cold weather, steady weather and changeable weather. It makes no difference. Just bark a little and some friend will explain that the kind of weather that we have been having is very dangerous and sure to give people colds. That's how I generally catch mine.

\* \* \*  
EXPERIENCE OF MANY years has convinced me that it doesn't pay to monkey with a cold. I have tried it several times, and made a mess of it every time. Flu is just a bad cold, with its own special assortment of bugs. I made the mistake of trying to fight off an attack of flu in 1918. We were going to have an election, and I have always been partial to elections. Then things were beginning to look like an armistice, and I had never celebrated an armistice day. I couldn't give up more than a couple of days, and I didn't—at

first. Then, when I had been back on the job for a day or two the doctor and the rest of them took things right out of my hands, and I had a quiet month in bed. I didn't know there was an election, and they had to pull off the armistice without me. There were some funny things about that armistice, too.

\* \* \*  
I HAVE LEARNED TO READ the signs, after a fashion, and when I begin to sneeze and to feel that tingling in the throat, and there is a general feeling of soreness and achiness, I call the doctor and take the rest which he invariably prescribes. I am satisfied that I gain time that way, and besides one needs an excuse for a little rest once in a while.

\* \* \*  
I HAVE JUST BEEN READING an article by Kathleen Norris dealing with home work. It interested me because home work is the kind I am doing just now. The kind about which she writes is that done by school children. Mrs. Norris does not criticize the present method, but she directs attention to the fact that in the life of the modern child school has become a place for recitation. Studying, which was once done in school, is now done more and more generally in the home. That imposes on the parents a different kind of responsibility from that which rested upon them when most studying was done under the direct supervision of the teacher.

\* \* \*  
EXPANSION OF CURRICULUM and adoption of the platoon system have also created new problems in school management. Looking back to my own school days I recall the one room with 80 or 90 children, little and big and one teacher. That teacher knew all about all the work of every child. Some home work was assigned, but all the assigning was done by one person. If I failed to do my home work in history I could not offer the excuse that my geography assignment had been too long. That teacher was boss of both history and geography. Also he knew how many pigs I had to feed and how many cows to milk. It was only by the exercise of great ingenuity that I was able to put anything over at all.

THE OLD SYSTEM WAS TO have one teacher for a group. The modern idea is to have one teacher for a subject. Perhaps the modern plan is better, but it must develop a certain tendency toward over-emphasis of particular subjects by instructors in those subjects, which may result in distortion of the picture or in the inclusion of too much material on a canvas of given size.

W. P. DAVIES.

Wed Oct 22

## *That Reminds Me—W.P.D.*

I SEE THAT NANCE O'NEILL is one of a company now rehearsing a new Harold Bell Wright talkie. I wonder if she is the same Nance O'Neill who starred here ever so many years ago in "Magda" and "The Fires of St. John." It doesn't seem possible, yet one never can tell. Nance O'Neill was a powerful and convincing actress, and she was at her best in such emotional drama as she gave us here. One would not suppose her capable of finding her way about in the smug propriety of a Harold Bell Wright story.

\* \* \*  
HOWEVER, THERE IS another side to it. A poor actor may make the best drama ridiculous, and a real dramatist may develop something fine out of unpromising material. It is commonly understood by most of those who believe that one William Shakespeare, of Stratford, wrote a number of plays which have become classics that Shakespeare obtained his plots from all sorts of sources, in some cases adapting plays which had been written generations before his time. There is nothing very remarkable about "Hamlet" as a story, and there have been written thousands of melodramas just as good as those which Shakespeare made immortal. Shakespeare took what he found and gave it the touch of genius which he had and others lacked. That's why there has been so much fuss over who wrote Shakespeare's plays. In a more recent time Joseph Jefferson took a cheap little melodrama, breathed the breath of life into it, and made "Rip Van Winkle" a great human document. Hence, it may be possible to do something with Harold Bell Wright.

I DO NOT WISH TO BE UNDERSTOOD as criticizing Harold Bell Wright, even by implication. I once read a review of one of Wright's books in which the critic, a man of national renown, gave the book quite high praise. He was taken to task by others, who insisted that the critic was lowering the standards of the profession by praising a book which had no literary merit whatever. The critic defended himself by saying that he had violated no literary law and impaired no literary standard. He did not consider a book by Harold Bell Wright as a literary work at all, and he had not discussed it from that standpoint. The work of that writer, he said, stood in a class by itself, and in its own class he considered the particular book in question a masterpiece.

\* \* \*  
ACCORDING TO A CURRENT magazine article the art of writing shorthand was invented by a young man named Tiro in the first century before Christ. Julius Caesar was familiar with the system, and used it, as did some of the other Roman emperors. They held contests and awarded prizes and also amputated the fingers of writers for mistakes. Please make a special note of that, Miss Flemingway. As I was saying, the Roman emperors wrote shorthand, more or less, as did Dickens, Franklin and John Wesley. But, presumably with the ancients, and certainly with the moderns, while each writer may have followed a system, each made such changes in it as suited his own convenience, so that within certain limits, each writer has developed a sort of system of his own, much of which would be unintelligible to anyone else.

\* \* \*  
I NEVER LEARNED TO write shorthand. My first knowledge of its existence came to me while I was at school and a traveling entertainer obtained the use of the schoolhouse for an evening performance. He gave a stereopticon lecture, gave a little talk on astronomy, demonstrated an electrical machine, sang a few songs, and made a talk on shorthand. Altogether it was a great night, and it all cost only ten cents. Out of it all I got the elements of one bit of knowledge, namely, that the

particular method by which ideas are expressed on paper are not ordained of God, but are developed by man in his own way and for his own conscience. That was worth the price of admission.

\* \* \*  
I SUPPOSE THAT EVERY person who has occasion to write much and fast, as in reporting speeches, making extended notes of college lectures, or any work requiring fairly accurate reproduction, developed symbols and abbreviations of his own. Contrary to what was once a very general belief, there are only occasional newspaper reporters who write shorthand. Shorthand is very useful in certain classes of newspaper work, and within a very limited field it is essential, but in the bulk of newspaper work it is not used. Some speeches which are to be used verbatim are usually in type before they are delivered, and in most general reporting a word jotted down here and there as a reminder will suffice.



News Oct-13

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

THINKING OF THIS AND that I recalled a parody of "Pinafore" which I saw when "Pinafore" was new. I don't remember the name of the skit, but it was a political burlesque, somewhat similar in type to the burlesques which are made features of the famous Gridiron club dinners in Washington, with men of political prominence presented in all sorts of absurd situations. There was the difference that whereas the Gridiron numbers are merely individual numbers on a general program, in the case which I mention there was but one number, and it occupied the entire evening.

I NEVER KNEW THE authorship of the parody or on what terms the "Pinafore" music and general form were used. The opera was then about the height of its popularity, and it must have cost somebody a pretty penny to obtain the rights for that purpose. The presentation was by an opera company of unusual merit. The elaborate settings and the serious manner in which all the work was done enhanced the absurdity of the whole performance.

\* \* \*

AS ALL THIS HAPPENED IN Canada, it was Canadian politicians who were burlesqued in the piece. Sir John A. MacDonald was then the most prominent man in Canada. He had been one of the most influential men in bringing about Canadian confederation. He had been premier of the dominion, had been defeated and reinstated. Appropriately he was cast in the character of Sir Joseph Porter. Each principal part was given similarly to some person then prominent in Dominion politics—Sir Charles Tupper; Sir Leonard Tilley; MacKenzie, Liberal leader; George Brown, owner of the Tor-

onto Globe; Edward Blake, later Liberal leader; and others conspicuous either as officials or as private citizens trying to pull political wires. Each was dressed in keeping with his part, but the features were those of the characters who had been freely cartooned and lampooned all over the country. The music was "Pinafore" music throughout, and the lines followed the form of the original, but consisted of doggerel, some of it very witty, in which hits were made right and left at parties and politicians.

\* \* \*

THE THING MADE A WONDERFUL hit, and I have wondered why some genius could not build a somewhat similar satire on American politics as of the year 1930 which would make him famous and give the rest of us a lot of fun. There is no lack of material or characters. For material, we have, for instance, the tariff, farm relief, prohibition, big and little navy, imperialism and little Americanism. The list might be extended almost indefinitely. And look at the characters! I should not introduce the president of the United States into such a medley, otherwise I should observe no limit. We have a former president who could be used to great advantage, and a vice president of Indian lineage and with social entanglements. We have Borah, Moses and Heflin, Longworth with his fiddle and Dawes with his pipe. In the matter of characters we have an embarrassment of riches.

\* \* \*

INSTEAD OF MAKING THE thing a parody, why not make it original? John Philip Sousa did a pretty good job with "El Capitan." Perhaps he might try his hand. And I should have Will Rogers write a lot of the text. He could have somebody help him out on the song hits.

\* \* \*

MENTION OF SIR JOHN MacDonald brings to mind an incident which to me was very interesting. As a boy I acquired the habit of attending political meetings. I saw and heard many of the prominent Canadian politicians of that time and became fairly familiar with their appearance. But although Sir John was by far the most outstanding Canadian of his generation, I never saw him. We never seemed to have business at the same place at the same time. Nevertheless, I knew his features, for

he was cartooned and caricatured from one end of the country to the other. He had a strongly marked face and a prominent nose, which doubtless made him attractive to the cartoonists. Perhaps a dozen years ago on a street in Winnipeg I met a man whose appearance at first startled me. My first thought was of Sir John MacDonald, for he was the living image of the Sir John of whom I had a mental picture. Then I remembered that Sir John had been dead for years, but that there had been a son, Hugh John MacDonald, who, I had a vague impression, had settled in Winnipeg. I inquired of a policeman if he knew the gentleman who had just passed. "Oh, yes," he replied. "That's Hugh John MacDonald, son of the late Sir John MacDonald." I had never seen either father or son, but after many years I recognized the son from his resemblance to the father as I had pictured the father from newspaper cartoons. I suppose hundreds of photographs would not have impressed me at all, but the cartoons had so brought out the distinctive features and expression that an indelible, and, apparently accurate picture had been made.

W. P. DAVIES.

7 Fri Oct 24

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

MOST OF US WHO HAVE ATTAINED years of wisdom can recall several periods of business depression. There were times when the bottom seemed to have dropped out of everything. Each time appeals were made to the government to set things right. No matter how we got into the mess, it was the business of the government to get us out. Usually government did make an honest effort to improve conditions, and its efforts were generally helpful. But when conditions were bettered, as they always were, the improvement was brought about by the people themselves. I never heard of anyone getting very far ahead except by settling right down in the traces and pulling.

\* \* \*

ONE OF MY GRANDFATHER'S stock stories was of an old English village character, notorious for his shiftlessness and his devotion to religious forms, who, when the larder ran low, prayed mightily for a potato pie. The pie never came. There is another story, often told, of a group of shipwrecked people in a boat. There were women and children on board. The wind blew, the lightning flashed and the thunder roared, and all the man power available was needed to keep the boat afloat. The biggest man in the party flopped down on his knees, folded his hands, and said "Let us pray." "That's all right," shouted the boatswain in charge, but let that little man pray. You big husky cuss grab an oar!"

You may type that, Miss Flemingway, while I think up something else. And please stop biting your pencil.

\* \* \*

THERE HAS BEEN A DEARTH of puzzles lately, but we have a new one from O. Karinierni, of Lawton, N. D., who writes:

"As there seems to be quite a bit of interest in puzzles and problems, a new one, at least, I have seen none like it.

"A farmer started seeding with three drills of different sizes hitched behind one tractor. One drill was 9 feet wide, another 11 feet and the third 14 feet. The tally on the 9 foot drill counted up to 16 acres and then started from zero again. Those on the other two drills counted up to zero and then started at zero. When the farmer started seeding all the tallies were set at zero. The farmer forgot them until he had finished seeding, when he found that the tally on the 9 foot drill stood at 6 acres that on the 11 foot drill at 18 acres, and that on the 14 foot drill at 12 acres. How many acres had been seeded altogether? I am curious as to whether this can be solved by arithmetic or algebra, or only by trial and error, the way I did it.

\* \* \*

THAT LOOKS LIKE AN INTERESTING problem. I am not sure that I have the right idea of it. If I have my guess would be that it can be solved by straight arithmetic, although the process may be complicated. Let the experts who patronize this column exercise their wits on it and send in the result.

\* \* \*

I HAVE BEEN WORRYING lately over where to find a quotation. This may not be quite accurate, but it is pretty close:

" 'Tis a most excellent matter. Would 'twere done."

The circumstances in which it is introduced into some play, as nearly as I can recall them, are that an ignorant fellow, being a spectator at a play which is away over his head, and being utterly bored, is asked how he likes it and responds as above. It seemed to me like something in Shakespeare, but I haven't been able to find it, and several persons who are much better versed in Shakespeare than I am do not know of it. An early response to this earnest appeal for information may save me some sleepless nights, and I need a lot of sleep.

W. P. DAVIES.



Sat Oct 25

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

THE SUBJECT OF JAZZ occupied the attention of the Seventh Day Adventist convention at Omaha. One speaker declared that the godless jazz music that is being hurled through the air into the homes of the people is doing more than any other single thing to keep people from the churches. He may be right, but on the other hand there is room for the thought that continual filling the air with jazz would do a lot toward driving people to church—provided they could keep jazz out of the churches. People will stand just about so much, and then they will seek some way to escape.

\* \* \*  
HEYWOOD BROWN THINKS that President Wilson's frank admission of fondness for mystery stories made the detective story habit respectable. It is true that Mr. Wilson was fond of such stories, but many other men eminent in public life or in business have also enjoyed this method of relaxation and made no secret of it. Long before the country ever heard of Woodrow Wilson many such men were known to be habitual readers of detective stories. Unless I am mistaken William Howard Taft devoured great quantities of them. Perhaps, like a great many others, he developed the habit in the woodshed or the attic and got so much fun out of it that he never cared to shake it off.

\* \* \*  
AN ENTERTAINING STORY of real estate rivalry which characterized the establishment of new towns in pioneer days relates to the experience of a Colonel George W. Sweet at Bismarck. Sweet represented a number of Eastern people who wished to control the principal part of the Bismarck townsite. Local people had the same ambition and there were clashes and

legal entanglements. The Sweet crowd seemed to have the better prospect of making their claims stand up.

\* \* \*  
ONE OF THE CHARACTERS of the Bismarck of that day was a woman known as Mrs. Pennell who professed to have psychic powers and who held seances at which she revealed secrets of the past and read the future. Sweet was interested in that sort of thing and met the woman frequently. During a private session one night the woman went into a trance and told Sweet that she saw a group of men gathering in the brush for the purpose of making a raid on Sweet and doing him bodily injury. She described these men, and from the descriptions Sweet recognized them as his real estate rivals. Some of them he knew to be tough characters, and he believed them quite capable of committing murder in order to remove an obstacle from their path. He got away from that place and hid until morning and immediately took his departure from Bismarck, leaving his adversaries a clear field. One of the Bismarck men, meeting Sweet long after in another city told him that he had been one of the raiding party, and that if Sweet had been found that night, in all probability he would not have lived to tell the tale. Sweet was thankful for a narrow escape.

\* \* \*  
IT DEVELOPED LATER THAT the Pennell woman had been a party to a conspiracy to scare Sweet out of town. She had been coached carefully and had played her part to perfection. One of the parties to the plot, although he had no interest in the real estate squabble, was Stanley Huntley, a young fellow who was employed on the Bismarck Tribune. Huntley was full of tricks and had a fertile imagination. The idea of playing on a superstition in just that way appealed to him as a huge joke, and he entered with a will into the framing of the plan. Huntley became quite well known later as a newspaper humorist. I think he wrote the "Spoopendyke Papers," which were quite popular for a time.

A hoax of that kind was just the sort of thing to appeal to those who participated in it. There was about it a spice of deviltry which

made it attractive for its own sake, and quite apart from any pecuniary interest which might exist in it.

Mon Oct 27

## That Reminds Me—W.P.D.

THE FIRST NUMBER OF Colonel Lounsberry's "Record" devoted nearly three pages to the University of North Dakota. The institution was then ten years old, and after sketching the primitive conditions which existed during the first two or three years of the university's life, the article describes in considerable detail the progress which had been made in academic work and the thoroughly modern conditions, both in physical equipment and in management which had been brought about in ten years.

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INSTEAD OF ONE BUILDING there were three. Instead of taking their meals with the janitor's family students had a regular eating place, with all modern conveniences. Instead of performing their morning ablutions at the pump which was situated just south of the old main building, students has access to running water piped all the way from Grand Forks. Some of the paragraphs are decidedly interesting, read in the light of later history, as for instance:

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"SATURDAY EVENING OF each week has been set aside as the entertainment evening. Lectures by different members of the faculty, open meetings of the two literary societies, musicales, simple plays, tableaux, charades, or informal games are the features of these entertainments, which are always well attended and apparently enjoyed. On Saturday the distinction of teacher and pupil is set aside, and the meeting is as of friend with friend.

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"PARTIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE are occasionally permitted to attend suitable entertainments in

Grand Forks accompanied at all times by a chaperone. This practice is insisted on, it might be well to explain, not with any idea that a watchman is necessary, but simply with a view to carrying out the more truly American conception that the presence of an older person is desirable in case of an emergency.

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"RECITATION PERIODS close at 4:30 o'clock, and the time before supper is disposed of according to the choice of the student. Generally an hour or hour and a half is spent in recreation. An interim of half an hour between supper and the evening study hour is spent by the young women in the parlor of the women's dormitory, and is devoted to music, conversation, or some simple amusement, which is promptly given up to the tinkle of the study bell.

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YOUNG MEN MAY CALL UP-on the young women at any leisure hour excepting Sundays, by notifying the preceptress in charge of the women's dormitory. At the tables in the dining hall young men and women are seated together, and as far as possible students are permitted to exercise their own choice, if they desire to do so, in the selection of table water. This custom is a comparatively recent one, and was entered upon as a venture. The results have been admirable.

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"WHEN THE BIRTHDAY cake or the box of good things from home arrives it is received openly by the son or daughter whose mouth has been watering for many days in pleasant anticipation of sampling 'mother's cooking' once more. After such arrivals simple spreads are in order, for which full permission is given by those in authority, who themselves remember the bliss of balancing on the edge of a bed while spearing at home dainties with a lead pencil or a hat pin. Not one case of illness has followed these simple festivities, which leads to the belief that much less injurious stuffing is done when consent is given for these little feasts than when the 'goodies' are hastily consumed under cover of darkness.

"IT IS SO THOROUGHLY BELIEVED that all work and no play not only makes Jack a dull boy, but has an equally stupefying effect on Jill, that plenty of play is provided by various outdoor sports. In the fall, football, shorn of its objectionable features, is enjoyed with much zest. During the fall skating is very popular among the students. A portion of the campus is flooded to the depth of about six inches, and the water freezing becomes an excellent rink, relieved of that element of danger which makes this sport objectionable to many parents."

That is truly a charming picture of quiet, simple, studious life. I wonder how many students of the 1895 period will recognize it.

—W. P. DAVIES.